

Isaiah 40:1 Give comfort, give comfort, to my people, says your God. 2 Say kind words to the heart of Jerusalem, crying out to her that her time of trouble is ended, that her punishment is complete; that she has been rewarded by the Lord's hand twice over for all her sins. 3 A voice of one crying, Make ready in the waste land the way of the Lord, make level in the lowland a highway for our God. 4 Let every valley be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low, and let the rough places become level, and the hilltops become a valley, 5 And the glory of the Lord will be made clear, and all flesh will see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has said it. 6 A voice of one saying, Give a cry! And I said, What is my cry to be? All flesh is grass, and all its strength like the flower of the field. 7 The grass becomes dry, the flower is dead; because the breath of the Lord goes over it: truly the people is grass. 8 The grass is dry, the flower is dead; but the word of our God is eternal. 9 You who give good news to Zion, get up into the high mountain; you who give good news to Jerusalem, let your voice be strong; let it be sounding without fear; say to the towns of Judah, See, your God! 10 See, the Lord God will come as a strong one, ruling in power: see, those made free by him are with him, and those whom he has made safe go before him. 11 He will give food to his flock like a keeper of sheep; with his arm he will get it together, and will take up the lambs on his breast, gently guiding those which are with young. ... 27 Why do you say, O Jacob, such words as these, O Israel, The Lord's eyes are not on my way, and my God gives no attention to my cause? 28 Have you no knowledge of it? has it not come to your ears? The eternal God, the Lord, the Maker of the ends of the earth, is never feeble or tired; there is no searching out of his wisdom. 29 He gives power to the feeble, increasing the strength of him who has no force. 30 Even the young men will become feeble and tired, and the best of them will come to the end of his strength; 31 But those who are waiting for the Lord will have new strength; they will get wings like eagles: running, they will not be tired, and walking, they will have no weariness.

The Bible in Basic English



YOUR April 2023 Apple of His Eye Mission Society Newsletter is here.

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BASIC JEWISH TEACHING: THE CALENDAR

The Jewish calendar is really two calendars in one. The civil year and New Year begin in September, the month of Tishre. The religious year begins with the month of Nissan, March or April. The first month of the civil calendar falls on the seventh month of the religious calendar.

The present Jewish calendar is lunisolar, the months being reckoned according to the moon and the years according to the sun. A month is the period of time between one conjunction of the moon with the sun and the next. The number of days in a year in this Jewish lunar calendar is shorter than the number of days in the solar calendar. The lunar year consists of twelve months, or 354 days, approximately 10 days, 21 hours shorter than the solar calendar.

To equalize the difference between the two systems, every two to three years the Jewish calendar adds another month, making a “leap year” consisting of 13 months. This thirteenth month is called *adar shnee*, meaning the second Adar, which is one of the names of another month. The adding of this leap year occurs seven times in each 19-year cycle. This keeps the Biblical festivals aligned with the appropriate seasons.



From Jordan Peiser

The hand of the LORD was upon me, and he brought me out in the Spirit of the LORD and set me down in the middle of the valley; it was full of bones. 2 And he led me around among them, and behold, there were very many on the surface of the valley, and behold, they were very dry. 3 And he said to me, “Son of man, can these bones live?” And I answered, “O Lord God, you know” (Ezekiel 37:1-3 ESV).

Shalom... I serve as a pastor and a front-line missionary in New Jersey. I have had the blessing of meeting with other Christians for regular prayer, evangelism, and outreach to our community.

Our group has hosted a presentation on fire safety with the local fire prevention officer, a Christ in the Passover Seder, and a Purim party! At the Purim party, we had food, fellowship, and an interactive retelling of the story of Esther. It has been a blessing to pray with people, share the Gospel, and talk with other Christians about the Jewish roots of Christianity and how Jesus fulfilled Old Testament prophecies and ceremonies.

But, that aside, today I wanted to reflect on one experience I had in light of the Ezekiel text cited above. I have been building relationships with people in my town, and one thing I have heard and experienced a lot is the intense sadness that people have because Church attendance is down, especially since the covid pandemic. People are thinking about the future of their congregations and about the people who might not hear the hope of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Let me tell you about Betty. Betty is a lay leader for the local Presbyterian church, a chaplain for our senior citizen’s housing, and leads the historical society. Over the last few months, I have gotten to know her and others in the community. Betty has welcomed me to the town and offered to help me in any way possible. A few weeks ago, she gave me a tour and told me stories from Maywood’s history and about the churches in the area. She talked about what it was like growing up in Maywood, how the next town over used to be a farming community and how Maywood would have events like an annual strawberry festival. But she also expressed deep pain as she told me about the change in church attendance at her congregation and as we drove past churches that are much smaller than they used to be or have closed over the last couple of years. But today’s text gives us hope! The people of Israel were in exile in Babylon. They were far from the temple and their homeland. It felt like all hope was lost. It felt like they were dry and dead bones

(Ezekiel 37:11 ESV). But God had a word of promise for them, and He has a word of promise for you and me. Ezekiel would be told to prophesy and say to the bones — representative of God’s People— “Hear the word of the Lord” (Ezekiel 37:4 ESV). God’s Word is what we turn to when the world looks dark, when it looks like there is no future for the Church, and when our loved ones do not know the hope and love that Jesus has for them.

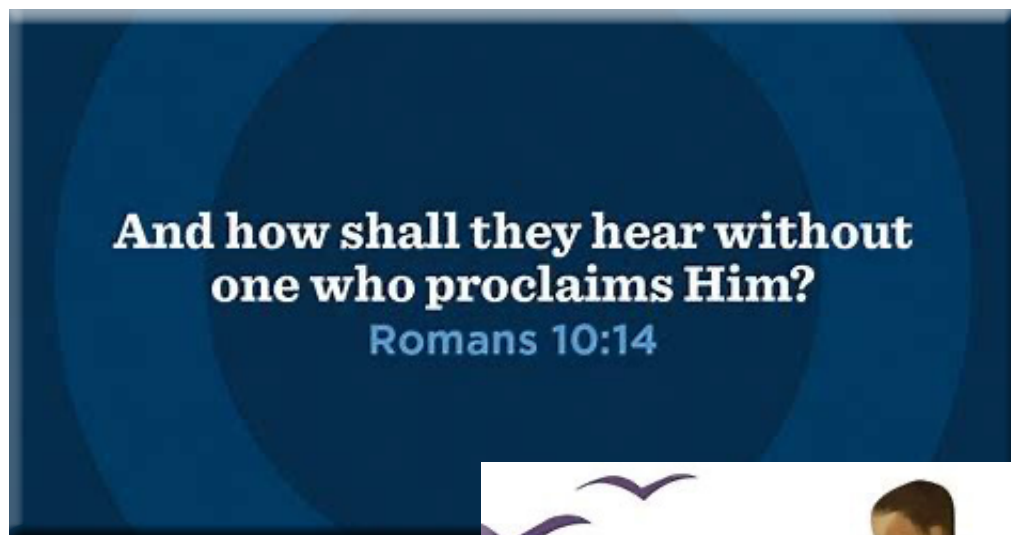


The Word of God carries a promise “I will open your graves and raise you from your graves, O my people... And I will put my Spirit within you, and you shall live” (Ezekiel 37:12, 14 ESV). The text from Ezekiel is a beautiful text about the resurrection of the dead that will occur when Jesus returns. But I think it is also a comfort for communities of faith who feel saddened and need to be encouraged. The Lord calls us to share the Word, pray, and trust in God to produce in us, our churches, and our communities.

Over the last few months I have learned:

1. There are other Christians who are filled with the love of Jesus and love for their communities. If you find them, you can find ways to partner with them as you seek to share the Gospel with others.
2. You never know how God will use relationships to open doors for telling others that Jesus loves them. One way to reach your community could be by inviting people with different skill sets and talents to present and talk in your church. You can offer them a platform, provide food, and pray with and for the people who come as you get to know the people in your community and listen to their stories.
3. God promises to save people through the Gospel, which means that as we pray and live in His Word, He will also show us opportunities to share the message of hope with others.

Let us pray: Almighty God, You have called Your church to witness that in Christ You have reconciled us to Yourself. Grant that by Your Holy Spirit we may proclaim the good news of Your salvation so that all who hear it may receive the gift of salvation; Through Jesus Christ, our Lord (Lutheran Service Book, 305).



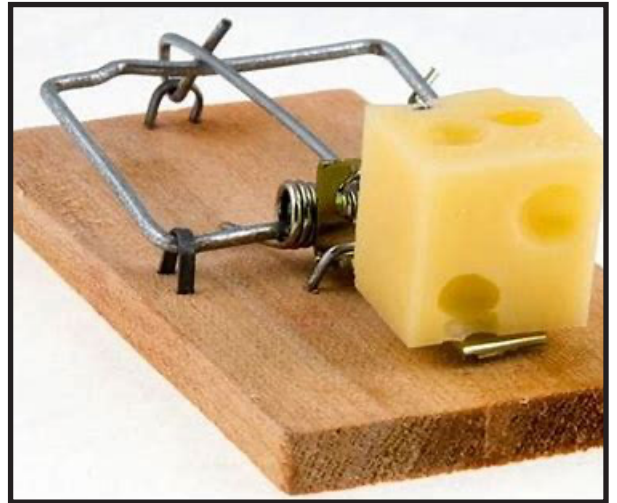
Farm Mouse

“For none of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself. Romans 14:7ESV

A mouse looked through the crack in the wall to see the farmer and his wife open a package. “What food might this contain?” the mouse wondered. He was devastated to discover it was a mousetrap.

Retreating to the farmyard, the mouse proclaimed the warning: “There is a mousetrap in the house! There is a mousetrap in the house!”

The chicken clucked and scratched, raised her head and said, “Mr. Mouse, I can tell this is a grave concern to you, but it is of no consequence to me. I cannot be bothered by it.”



The mouse turned to the pig and told him, “There is a mousetrap in the house!”

The pig sympathized, but said, “I am so very sorry, Mr. Mouse, but there is nothing I can do but pray. Be assured you are in my prayers”.

The mouse turned to the cow and said, “There is a mousetrap in the house! There is a mousetrap in the house!”

The cow said, “Wow, Mr. Mouse. I’m sorry for you, but it’s no skin off my nose.” So, the mouse returned to the house, head down, and dejected, to face the farmer’s mousetrap alone.

That very night a sound was heard throughout the house – like the sound of a mouse trap catching its prey. The farmer’s wife rushed to see what was caught. In the darkness, she did not see it was a venomous snake, whose tail the trap had caught. The snake bit the farmer’s wife. The farmer rushed her to the hospital, and she returned home with a fever.

Everyone knows you treat a fever with fresh chicken soup, so the farmer took his hatchet to the farmyard for the soup’s main ingredient. But his wife’s sickness continued, so friends and neighbors came to sit with her around the clock.

To feed them he butchered the pig. The farmer’s wife did not get well, she died.

So many people came for her funeral, the farmer had his cow slaughtered to provide enough meat for all of them.

The mouse looked at it all from his crack in the wall with great sadness.

So, the next time you hear someone is facing a problem and think it doesn't concern you, remember – when one of us is threatened, we are all at risk.

We are all involved in this journey called life. We must keep an eye out for one another and make an extra effort to encourage one another.

REMEMBER: EACH OF US IS A VITAL THREAD IN ANOTHER PERSON'S TAPESTRY; OUR LIVES ARE WOVEN TOGETHER FOR A REASON.

Our life is affected by what others do and what we do has a tremendous affect on others. This makes the **application** of Philippians 2:3,4 very important.

“Do nothing out of rivalry or vanity; but, in humility, regard each other as better than yourselves - look out for each other's interests and not just for your own.” Philippians 2:3,4 CJB

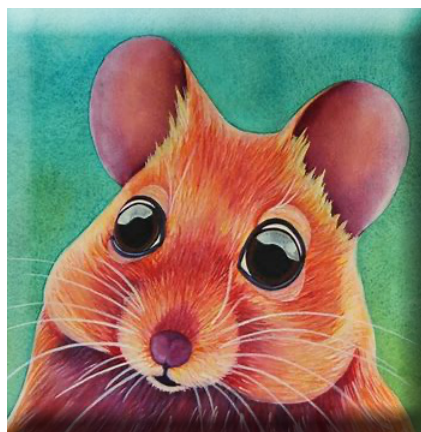
love, from my heart, nanC

(If this article has blessed you – share it)



#STAND UP TO JEWISH HATE

Do you have a prayer request? Share them to us. nancy.cohen@appleofhiseye.org
We would love to hear from you and how God is blessing your life!





What Does ‘Amen’ Mean?

As in other faith traditions, saying amen indicates the speaker affirms the truth of what was said.

The word amen is a liturgical response to hearing someone else recite a blessing or certain prayers. The Hebrew root of amen, aleph-mem-nun (אמן), is shared with the word *emunah*, meaning faith or belief. Reciting amen is thus an indication that the speaker affirms the truth of what was said, an indication reflected in its common English translation as “verily” or “truly.” It is used in both religious contexts — as a response to a blessing or prayer — and sometimes to punctuate everyday declarations. Jews typically pronounce it *ah-men* rather than *ay-men*, which is more common in other faith traditions.

In everyday Jewish practice, amen is most commonly recited in response to hearing someone else recite a blessing. This is the case for blessings recited in the course of the thrice daily prayer services — for example, during the public repetition of the Amidah prayer, the congregation recites amen after each of its constituent blessings. It’s also the case for blessings recited in other contexts, including before and after eating and drinking. According to Jewish law, reciting amen with intention after hearing someone else say a blessing is akin to having actually said the blessing. It is through the power of reciting amen that one person has the ability to recite a blessing on someone else’s behalf.

The term itself originates in the Bible — specifically in Deuteronomy, where the word appears at the conclusion of each of twelve successive verses at the close of the 27th chapter, each declaring someone as cursed for violating a particular commandment. After each one, the text states: “And all the people shall say, Amen.” It also appears three times in duplicate (amen amen) in the Psalms, dividing that collection of 150 liturgical poems into distinct groupings or “books.”

Happy Mother's Day



From Nancy:

Remembering the women in my life;

My mother Donna (back row right)

My grandmother Ruth (front row left)

My daughter Toi (front middle)

My great-grandma-ma, Della (front row right)

Is. 66:13 As to one who is comforted by his mother, so will I give you comfort: and you will be comforted in Jerusalem.

As we bask in the afterglow of our Passover/Easter celebrations, we give thanks to God for caring friends like you who support us with your sacrificial gifts!

YOU make it possible for us to move forward in our 27th year and for that we praise the Lord!



Each year we host a Passover Seder in our home. Nancy is the hero of this festival for ALL her creative work on this. This year we gathered on Saturday, April 8th with family and friends.

Toi, Nancy's daughter, invited some of her friends. Gabriella is a new-ish Jewish believer who is the only one in her family to come to faith at this time. It was her first Messianic Passover Seder and she couldn't have been more thrilled as we read through the Passover Haggadah.



[If you would like a free copy of my Messianic Passover Haggadah, please send me an e-mail and I will get it out to you quickly!]

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She spoke with me afterward and said it all fell into place for her. She has been attending a congregation in the Austin area which she really likes. But they do not interweave the historic Jewish roots of the faith so she finds herself conflicted. When she saw the symbolism of the Passover pointing to Jesus, especially in the bread and the wine, it was like – as Nancy says – the coin dropped. Please pray for her as she grows, especially that her family, which has not cut her off like mine did, would hear the Gospel and come to faith, too.

Donna also came to the seder. She was eager to tell us that her family's Jewish roots go back a long ways, but that she did not realize that meant she was Jewish, too. I gave her a copy of my latest book, Jewish By Discovery, which helps explain that God's covenant is transmitted 100% each time. She was thrilled to realize her heritage and blessed to see how the Passover brings clear focus to Jesus.

Please continue praying for our son, 43 year old son, Micha, in hospice care battling Huntington's Disease.

*Thank you for caring, praying and sharing
in our 27th year!*